

NFHS Track & Field/Cross Country Rules Changes - 2024

By NFHS on August 14, 2023

3-8-1: Permits the Games Committee to set requirements for each meet on the number of timing officials.

Rationale: As technology continues to evolve in the sports of track and field and cross country, not all FAT systems require separate operators and evaluators. The Games Committee may set requirements for each meet on the number of timing officials.

4-2-1 NOTE (NEW): ~~Permits state associations to set the participation limitations within their state, with six events being the maximum number.~~ **NJSIAA will not be adopting 6 events per athlete.**

We will continue with the current rule which permits 4 events per athlete.

Rationale: ~~Adds flexibility for state associations to determine the number of events best suited for their state.~~

5-3-1, 9-4-1 (NEW): Removed and corrected information concerning track staggers

Rationale: Track staggers are dependent on the geometry of each individual track, and a competent surveyor should determine the lane staggers.

5-7-4c,d NOTE (NEW), 8-4-4 NOTE 2 (NEW): Extraneous motion before the device is fired does not necessarily require a false start to be charged unless the runner leaves their mark with hand or foot after the set command or leaves their mark with a forward motion without the starting device being fired.

Rationale: The change makes it clearer as to the definition of a false start and how it should be consistently officiated.

5-14-1, 2: Clarifies that displacement of any hurdle by hand is an infraction.

Rationale: Offers guidance to officials and umpires when determining hurdle infractions.

6-2-2d: Clarifies when a competitor enters a vertical jump for the first time, at any height, no matter the number of competitors left that this competitor is only permitted one minute for their attempt.

Rationale: This clarifies in the vertical jumps how the rule is to be interpreted and adds additional support to the official's decisions when a competitor enters after the event has been started.

6-3-2b: Added language in vertical jumps when breaking ties and competitors withdraw from the competition/jump-off.

Rationale: The addition offers guidance to officials when two or more tied competitors withdraw from the competition/jump-off at the same time.

6-3-2b NOTES (NEW): Any athlete withdrawing from a jump-off concedes the higher place but retains their performance in the event.

Rationale: The new note explains that an athlete withdrawing from a jump-off concedes the higher place but does not negate their performance in the event nor is it unsporting to simply withdraw in this scenario. The addition of the new note helps explain how to officiate these scenarios.

6-4-1, 6-5-1, 6-6-1: Permits athletes in the throws to apply tape to their fingers as long as the fingers are not taped together and all fingers can move independently.

Rationale: The rules change offers flexibility to athletes to apply tape to their fingers or wear a wrist wrap as long as there are no artificial aids within the wrap such as hard plastic pieces to keep the wrist stiff.

8-1 and 8-5: Re-organization of the cross country course layout.

Rationale: Offers guidance on the relay exchange zone for indoor track and field.

9-6-1 (NEW) Clarifies the indoor track and field exchange zone.

Rationale: Offers guidance on the relay exchange zone for indoor track and field.

2024 Editorial Changes

4-2-1, 4-6-5, 5-9-2

2024 Points of Emphasis

1. Fair Starts
2. Sportsmanship
3. Cross Country Safety